

## Better Choices For America

The Challenge&hellip;

What My Colleagues and I Proposed &hellip;

What Congress Did Instead &hellip;

Achieve Success in Iraq

Redeploying U.S. troops at the earliest possible date to allow the Iraqis to take responsibility for their country.

Greater Congressional oversight of the planning and management of the war.

Provided no plan for success. Conducted virtually no oversight.

Spent \$8 billion a month on Iraq with no accountability.

Maintain the United States&rsquo; Position as the World&rsquo;s Top Economy

An Innovation Agenda to double federal research funding, enhance the R&D tax credit, and make the U.S. independent of oil from the Middle East.

Failed to make needed investments in NASA, NSF, and the NIH.

Failed to enact even a 1-year extension of the R&D tax credit, which expired in 2005.

#### Help Students Learn and Help Schools Meet Accountability Standards

An additional \$1.2 billion for education initiatives to help meet the federal promises to fund education programs.  
Cut funding for No Child Left Behind by \$500 million this year, adding to a \$16.4 billion shortfall since 2002.

#### Help Families Pay for College

A \$300 increase for the maximum Pell Grant to ensure it keeps pace with the growth in college expenses.  
Increased the funding for the maximum Pell grant by only \$100, forcing low-income students to borrow more.

#### Provide a Living Wage to Low-Income Workers

An increase in the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour for 6.6 million Americans with no strings attached.  
Tied a minimum wage increase to the elimination of the Estate Tax, a tax cut for America's wealthiest families which will eventually cost upwards of \$60 billion a year.

#### Repair Crumbling Water Infrastructure

A \$250 million increase in clean water and water infrastructure programs to begin addressing an estimated 20 year, \$338 billion need.  
Cut clean water programs for the third straight year, resulting in a 50% reduction in these programs since 2004.

#### Help Consumers with High Energy Bills

Full funding of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and a greater investment in R&D for new and renewable energy sources.  
Underfunded LIHEAP by more than \$1 billion and cut energy R&D resources by \$750 million.

#### Address Crime and Violence

An additional \$312 million for local law enforcement to address the largest increase in violent crime since 1991.  
Cut federal funding for local law enforcement by 46% since 2001.

#### Plug Holes in Homeland Security

Full funding to hire the 4,000 additional border patrol agents approved by Congress in 2004.

An additional \$600 million for port security, container inspections, and other related security measures.

Failed to secure adequate funding for border agents, ensuring that more than 700 posts will remain vacant.

Provided only 13% of what the Coast Guard estimates is needed for port security.

#### Pay our Debt to Veterans

A \$2.6 billion increase in funding for veterans's healthcare.

Adopted a budget that underfunds veterans's healthcare by \$8.6 billion between 2008 and 2011.

#### Preserve Our National Parks

A \$300 million increase to address maintenance and staff shortfalls at National Parks.

Cut funds for Park Service operations by \$100 million.

#### Protect the Environment from the Threat of Global Warming

Mandatory caps and reductions of global greenhouse gases.

Convened hearings to challenge the scientific consensus on climate change.

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